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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/996,206	11/28/2001	Dennis H. Vaders	27502/35075	1251

7590

10/02/2003

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EXAMINER
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YAO, SAMCHUAN CUA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1733

DATE MAILED: 10/02/2003

5

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AS-5

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/996,206

Applicant(s)

VADERS, DENNIS H.

Examiner

Sam Chuan C. Yao

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1733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
  - I. Claims 1-11 and 13-20, drawn to a method of manufacturing a contoured cellulosic article, classified in class 156, subclass 296.
  - II. Claims 12 and 22, drawn to a consolidated cellulosic article, classified in class 428, subclass 141.
  - III. Claims 1-11 and 22, drawn to a method of manufacturing a contoured cellulosic article, classified in class 264, subclass 109+.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions (I & III) and II are related as process of making and product made.

The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case, the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process such as directly heat-pressing a mat of resin impregnated cellulosic material in a pair of contoured platens.

3. Claims 1-11 are treated as linking claims to Groups I and III.

4. Groups I and III are directed to distinct methods, where patentability in the independent claims of each group is based on divergent combination of method steps.

For instance, independent claim 13 of Group I requires applying suction to a mat to hold the mat, and then scalping a top surface of the mat to create a uniform height; while independent claim 22 requires pre-pressing a mat to a 1<sup>st</sup> density and consolidating the

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mat to form a second density, wherein the second density being greater than the 1<sup>st</sup> density. The differences between these groups are critical and significant to the extent that the inventions constitute prima facie patentably distinct combinations, absent evidence to the contrary. This can readily and clearly be demonstrated by a side-by-side comparison of the independent claims. Similarities of the independent claims are merely superficial, since certain significant limitations in one of the groups find no counterpart in the other group(s) and vice versa.

Presently, no claim is generic. **Rejoinder of these two groups of method will be considered, upon indication of allowable subject matter, depending on the basis thereof.**

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification; and, the search required for Group I is not required for Group III, and vice versa, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6.

7. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Species A: machining is performed along **one** of a longitudinal and lateral axis of a mat;

Species B: machining is performed along **both** of a longitudinal and lateral axis of a mat.

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Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claim 1 is generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

8. A telephone call was made to Mr. Thomas Miller on 09-30-03 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made, because Counsel's office was already closed.


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Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sam Chuan C. Yao whose telephone number is (703) 308-4788. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday with second Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael W Ball can be reached on (703) 308-2058. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.

  
Sam Chuan C. Yao  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1733

Scy  
09-30-03